

CPD qualifications

# finance skills for public sector managers

CIPFA Diploma



# \ about

Organisations across the public sector continue to face significant challenges. There are ever-present budgetary pressures, the need to find savings and make efficiencies, all whilst meeting increasing demands for services and maintaining strong financial management.

Alongside those working in the finance team, we believe everyone who manages a budget or cost centre has an important role to play in meeting these challenges, particularly by ensuring resources are used as efficiently and effectively as possible.

As a response to this, CIPFA has developed seven 'Finance Skills' modules that cover core finance topics:

- Governance and Accountability
- Budget Management and Control
- Developing a Business Case
- Risk Management and Assurance
- Fraud Awareness
- Procurement and Contract Management
- Commercial Awareness

When taken together, the seven modules can lead to the Diploma in Finance Skills for Public Sector Managers and will give you a broad and solid grounding in the areas that make up public financial management. When purchased individually, they will enable you to focus on the areas that relate most closely to your job role.

## Who are the modules for?

The Finance Skills modules are designed specifically for those who have no formal qualifications in finance or accountancy but who, as part of their job roles, need to understand robust governance; budgeting and financial management; and best practice in procurement and fraud prevention.

This programme is aimed at anyone who manages a budget or cost centre as part of a non-finance role in the public sector.

## Flexible delivery

### DIPLOMA

Complete all seven modules to gain the full Diploma  
Mandatory assessment

Choose to study:  
Online | In-house

Or

### INDIVIDUAL

Complete one or a selection of individual modules  
No assessment

Choose to study:  
Online | In-house

# module outlines

## Finance Skills: Governance and Accountability

This module provides insight into best practice governance principles that can be applied to any public service organisation.

You will explore the principles of good governance; the role of an efficient Board; the concepts of accountability and other public service principles; and how performance (including financial management) can be effectively scrutinised within an effective governance framework.

### Learning outcomes

- Understand the development of corporate governance principles and the concept of accountability in the public sector.
- Understand the expected Standards in Public Life and the extent to which they have been incorporated in a public body.
- Understand how effective management contributes to good governance in a public body.

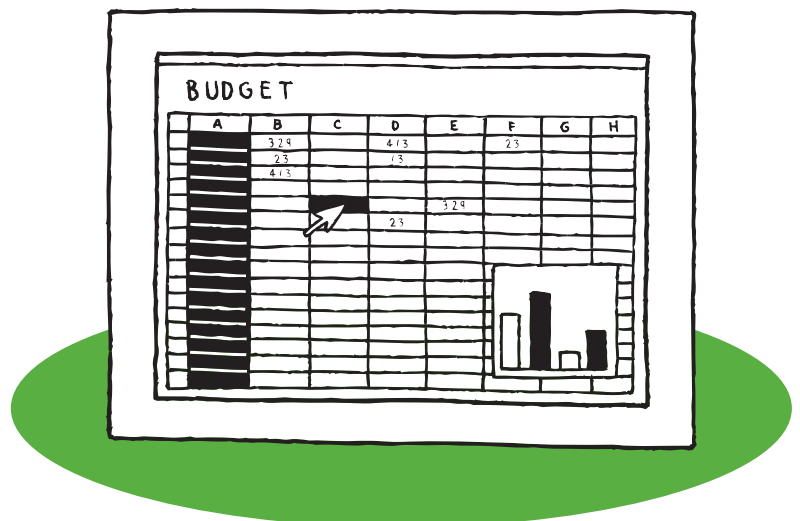
## Finance Skills: Budget Management and Control

This module focuses on how to undertake financial management activities and financial decision-making.

It provides guidance on planning, preparing, monitoring and controlling budgets, and on pricing and variance analysis. You will also be guided on how to ensure that your financial management is robust.

### Learning outcomes

- Understand the characteristics of good financial management and the role of the manager in planning, monitoring and controlling budgets.
- Understand the procedures to plan, monitor and control budgets.
- Understand the principles of costing a service.



## Finance Skills: Developing a Business Case

This module provides an in-depth understanding of how to prepare a business case in accordance with generally accepted best practice.

You will work through the steps involved in a business case, including formulating objectives, measurement of costs and benefits, and other arrangements such as financial impact and post-implementation review.

### Learning outcomes

- Understand the aims and objectives of developing a business case and the situations in which it can be used.
- Understand the basic techniques of developing a business case.
- Understand how to review the viability of various options using financial and non-financial data.

## Finance Skills: Risk Management and Assurance

This module explores how the various areas of business risk impact on the corporate governance of an organisation.

You will consider how risks are identified, managed and reported in public sector organisations. You will also explore the concept of assurance in demonstrating effective governance, as well as the main sources of assurance provision, plus the risks involved in changing delivery models.

### Learning outcomes

- Understand risk management models and processes.
- Understand the risks associated with changing delivery models and how these can be mitigated.
- Understand how organisations obtain assurance on risk management and corporate governance arrangements.

## Finance Skills: Fraud Awareness

This module provides a comprehensive introduction to fraud awareness, as budget holders and line managers have a key role to play in the prevention and detection of fraud in their organisations.

You will explore the difference between fraud and theft and the legislation covering fraud. The module will help you to assess and manage fraud risks, boosting your awareness of how and why fraud occurs, the various types of fraud and how fraud can be prevented and detected. The module also focuses on the controls, policies and procedures that public sector organisations should have in place to assist managers in the prevention and detection of fraud.

### Learning outcomes

- Understand what fraud is and the different types of fraud.
- Understand how and why fraud occurs.
- Understand how to respond effectively to fraud risk.

## Finance Skills: Procurement and Contract Management

As budget holders often commission services, this module looks at how to manage procurement activity in a practical manner to help achieve real value for money.

You will explore the essentials of good contract management, including critical success factors and how to balance innovative thinking, align conflicting interests, introduce best practice (from both the public and private sectors), and change the behaviours of public bodies and contractual partners to achieve better service outcomes.

### Learning outcomes

- Understand the management of procurement in the public sector context and how it can support delivery of the organisation's overall strategy, policy framework and legal obligations.
- Be able to apply the principles and practices of contract management to meet an organisation's overall strategy and leverage the potential value from the supply chain.

## Finance Skills: Commercial Awareness

This module provides guidance and knowledge that can be useful in the decision making process around commerciality of public services.

You will examine what 'being commercial' in the public sector means and the strategies and tools that can help assess the commercial appropriateness of a service. You will gain an understanding of the regulations around charging and trading; consider pricing models; and gain an overview of different delivery models.

### Learning outcomes

- Understand what 'commercial awareness' means and the approaches to be taken in assessing and ensuring the success of any commercial venture.
- Understand the trading and charging regulations, and relevant pricing strategies.
- Understand different delivery models.



# the full diploma

Studying the full Diploma will give you a broad and solid grounding in governance and accountability, budget management and control, business cases, risk management and assurance, fraud awareness, procurement and contract management, and commercial skills.

## Delivery

You can choose to complete the full Diploma:

- wholly online via CIPFA's online learning environment
- in-house, at your location, which will be cost-effective for organisations interested in training a number of individuals or whole teams.

## Duration

The full Diploma will take seven to ten months to complete.

Each module requires approximately 14 hours of work – four hours for the core content plus 10 hours to complete the mandatory assessment.

If you choose to complete the full Diploma online, you will have access to all of the learning materials for 18 months.

## Assessment

For each module, you will be asked to submit a written assignment in which you demonstrate your understanding of the learning and your ability to transfer it to your work place and into your own work practices.

Your assignments will be marked against assessment criteria which will be shared with you. Whether studying online or taking part in an open course, your tutor will be on hand to provide support and guidance throughout.

## Accreditation

On successful completion of all seven modules and the related assessment, you will be awarded the CIPFA Diploma in Finance Skills for Public Sector Managers.

The Diploma has been mapped as broadly equivalent to a level seven (post-graduate) qualification in relation to the degree of challenge.

## Pricing

The online Diploma costs £950 + VAT per person.

The cost for delivering the full Diploma in-house will be agreed with you based on your location and the number of delegates taking part.

A 10% discount is available to all CIPFA members.

The price includes:

- Tuition and all course materials
- Assessment, marking and moderation

## Book now

To register for the online Diploma, visit:  
[www.cipfa.org/financeskillsformanagers](http://www.cipfa.org/financeskillsformanagers)

Or phone: **+44 (0)20 7543 5600**

To discuss running the full Diploma in-house, contact us at: [InHouseTraining@cipfa.org](mailto:InHouseTraining@cipfa.org)



# choose individual modules

As not everyone will want or need to complete the full Diploma, each Finance Skills module is available to purchase individually. This means you can 'pick and mix' the topic or topics that you're particularly interested in or that relate most closely to your job role.

## Delivery

If purchasing individual Finance Skills module(s), you can either study:

- wholly online via CIPFA's online learning environment
- in-house, at your location, which will be cost-effective for organisations interested in training a number of individuals or whole teams.

## Duration

Each module will take approximately four hours to complete.

If you are studying online, you will have access to all of the learning materials for each module for three months.

## Assessment

The modules are not assessed when they are purchased individually.

## Pricing

Each module costs £99 + VAT per person.

The price includes all course materials.

## Buy now

To purchase individual Finance Skills modules, visit:

[www.cipfa.org/financeskillsformanagers](http://www.cipfa.org/financeskillsformanagers)

Or phone: **+44 (0)20 7543 5600**

For more information about running the individual Finance Skills modules in-house, contact us at:

[InHouseTraining@cipfa.org](mailto:InHouseTraining@cipfa.org)



# about us

## Why train with CIPFA?

CIPFA has a long history of delivering outstanding training to finance professionals and public service leaders in the UK and across the world.

As the only professional body exclusively for people in public finance, we understand the market challenges and are committed to providing the best training and development tools to support practitioners at all levels of public service, throughout their careers.



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[www.cipfa.org](http://www.cipfa.org)

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